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GRACE, PEACE, AND REVOLUTION

A JOB FOR THE CHURCH

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IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

INTERPRETING THE NEWS
By Louise Harding

Vol. XII, No. 2 30 cents

INTERPRETING THE NEWS

By Louise Harding

ARAB-ISRAEL CONFLICT:

Skirmishes (such as opened the war on Korea) have been going on for many months. Dec. 15, Nasser said Egypt was informing UN that Egypt and Syria would attack Israel on two fronts if there was "any further Israeli aggression." Mch 8, Hammarskjold said he did not feel the Security Council could contribute much at this time. Mch 11, Israel demanded a UN investigation of "menacing" Egyptian troop concentrations on the Israeli border.

An Israeli foreign ministry spokesman charged that Egyptian forces, including heavy armored units, have been massing in the Gaza and El Arish areas in increasing numbers. Mch 12, Maj. Gen. Burns proposed that neutral inspection teams patrol the Israeli-Arab borders to bring a halt to daily clashes threatening the peace of the Middle East.

Both sides brought new charges of border violations against the other, including an Israeli charge that Jordanian forces firing across the border with rifles, automatic weapons and mortars killed one Israeli and wounded two others.

Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria announced a common front.

Mch 14, Israel and Jordan accused each other of shooting up the divided border village of Bartaa. One Arab woman reported killed, and three Jordanian guardsmen and an Israeli policeman reported wounded. Pres. Eisenhower said American interests would be "gravely jeopardized" if war broke out in the Middle East, and indicated a US move for UN action to block an Israeli-Arab clash was imminent. He said (UP) that some UN action to ease the tension is under intense study and this country will move as soon as decisions are reached.

Mch 16, (UP) High administration officials said UN action was being favored by the US despite reported opposition to such a move at this time by UN Secy. Gen. Dag Hammarskjold.

It was reported that US favored (1) A blunt warning to both Israel and the Arabs . . . or (2) A promise of tough UN action to punish an aggressor . . . Officials studying secret dispatches from the Middle East were downcast over prospects of keeping peace in the area.

Mch 16, (UP) The President and his advisors have placed on Russia responsibility for sharpening prospects of a Middle Eastern war through Communist arms sales to Egypt.

But U.S. had offered arms to Egypt *for cash.* Use of the UN to preserve peace was being looked into "very carefully." Mr. Eisenhower said the UN and allied cooperation were the best way of keeping the peace.

SF Chronicle expresses agreement with Sir Anthony Eden in his remark to the House of Commons that Israel should find the three-power declaration of 1950 "infinitely more valuable than an agreement to be allowed to buy a certain number more tanks and airplanes, and definitely better in the cause of peace than an arms race."—This is also the expressed opinion of Eisenhower. Some nations in the Middle East evidently think differently, for (Mch. 13) it was announced from Baghdad that Iraq

would soon receive a big new shipment of arms supplied under the US military aid program. The third of such arms shipments reached Iraq Feb 22, and there disputed tanks went through to Saudi Arabia despite Jewish remonstrances: an important base in that country—from which, we are told, *Russia can be reached*—is at issue, the US lease being up presently.

Thus we see that the motive for the final decision on the tanks was —base. Also oil.

Israel, having started out as an extremely democratic land, fell under the influence of reactionaries in the American Jewish Community, and openly joined the coalition against Russia.

All this jockeying about bringing in UN contrasts sharply with what happened about Korea in 1950. There also, both sides accused each other—*but the claim of north Korea was suppressed from the official documents, thus rendering them fraudulent.*

Going back to Oct. 6, 1952, we find Candidate Stevenson asking an audience at St. Paul, Minn., whom they preferred to think responsible for the war in Korea—"Stalin, or your own President." Since then, both Rhee and his foreign miinster, Ben C. Limb, have made public confession that they started the war, *in order to fight Communism.* (But we have never heard a retraction from Stevenson.)

Iowa Union Farmer (Des Moines), in its Sept. 19, 1952 issue, mentioned an Iowa farmer who sent to the Dept. of State the IUF full-uage article entitled "Debunking the Korean War." Wrote the editor:—

> "About two weeks later, he received a long letter from the State Department, and also a lot of the Department pamphlets and some US pamphlets containing all the documents on the Korean War. While the latter attempted to refute our "IUF" article, it—plus the documents—actually helped confirm the facts stated in our article.
>
> "Lie No. 1 was the charge of North Korean aggression. This was supposed to be based on the report of the UN Commission on Korea naming North Korea the aggressor. But UNCOK did not say North Korea was the aggressor.
>
> "The documents and the letter confirmed the point that President Truman at noon of June 27th "ordered U.S. aid and sea forces to give the Korean troops cover and support," quote from the State Department's letter. This of course was before the action was approved by the UN. (At 3 o'clock, that afternoon. L.H.) This therefore not only makes a farce out of the contention that we went in to support the United Nations, but it does much more than that. It actually means that this whole 'police action' and 'defence' :program is no defence at all.
>
> "Mark Twain once said that any country that goes thousands of miles to defend itself is looking for trouble."

The Nov. 1, 1955 issue of "The Churchman" (118 E. 28 St. NY 16) carried an article by the Rev. J. Spencer Kennard, Jr., for many years a Baptist missionary in China, under the title of "The Lesson of Korea," in which he states a number of cogent reasons for doubting the Dulles-MacArthur account. He mentions the May 30 election defeat of Rhee,

and that he was saved by the war. And:—

"To Dulles and MacArthur also the war was a God-send, for it terminated 'appeasement' and provided the sinews of manifest destiny. Financial circles were jubilant: according to *U.S. News and World* Report, industrial production leaped to 'an all-over peacetime high" (9.1.50), the ghost of depression being laid to rest as effectively as though the incident had been made to order. How serious the crisis was appears from the remark of Roger Babson, 'If it hadn't been for the Korean affair this bubble would be bursting now. *(N.Y. Times* 10-3-50).

"And at last came confession. Speaking over Channel 7, WABC-TV, New York outlet on October 19, 1953, the Hon. Ben C. Limb, Ambassador to the Republic of Korea to the U.S.A., declared that —yes—it was his own government that started the hostilities. Moreover, he added, the government intended to renew the struggle and had supporting commitments from its allies.

"The true beginning of the war will thus be probably ascribed by future historians to the incident reported in the first edition of *The New York Times* of June 26, 1950: 'This morning, according to the South Korean Office of Public Information, South Korean troops pushing northward captured Kaeju, capital of Wranghoe Province, which is a mile north of the border." In all subsequent editions this item was skilfully revamped . . .

"Elsewhere the Southerners must have kept to their side of the 'frontier'. And so it was that some hours later the Military Advisory Group, which was visiting sectors where retaliating Northerners had penerated the Southern lines, 'partially confirmed . . . reports that North Korean forces invaded . . . at several points." (Dots in original). The telegram was sent by U. S. Ambassador Muccio. The initial report made no charge of aggression. And it did not say who began the fighting! it merely said that each side accused the other. Our state Department did not see fit to include this telegram in the supposedly complete list of documents relating ot the outbreak of hostilities. From the Muccio message it omitted the words concerning the Rhee sources and the fact that confirmation was incomplete.

"Why were facts like these withheld from the American public? A partial answer is found in the Jesuit agents who have infiltrated out State Department. Does it not look as though these Jesuits and their fellow protagonists of an 'inevitable' World War III invented the charge of 'Communist aggression' as a means of assuring a Korean beachhead?"

Summing up, Dr. Kennard says:—

"The lesson of Korea to us as Protestant churchmen is don't get caught again by war propaganda. We must take no small blame for 30,000 Americans and 3,000,000 Asiatics dead, for inflation and taxes that devour a third of our incomes, and for continued world unrest . . ."

He also mentions that it takes courage to stand out against war hysteria.

This reminds one of a letter that was addressed to this writer, in

the course of some correspondence, by Bishop Oxnam, of the Methodist Church. In quite superior tone, it says (Sept. 26)—

> "In reply to your letter of Sept. 16, let me say that the information that I have received concerning the Korean situation would indicate that you are not informed concerning the facts. I heard this entire issue discussed with the greatest care in the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs. This is an international body with some of the most distinguished leaders in international affairs in the membership, including such men as Arnold Toynbee, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Baron Van Aspeck. The United States commission was on the ground. Its report constitutes the most authoritative information we have. There is no question whatsoever in my mind but that this is a clear case of aggression upon the part of North Korea, sponsored by the Soviet Government . . . "

According to U.S. press reports, the UN commission was *not* on the ground, if that means the scene of battle. They were in Seoul, fast asleep when fighting began at 4 a.m. Further-more, by the time the foregoing letter was written, Sir John Pratt had expressed the fraud in suppressing vital parts of Amb. Muccio's telegram.

THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION in CZECHOSLOVAKIA

By Karel Stradal

The final plans of the Czechoslovakian reactionaries for a counter-revolutionary putsch were given impetus by the increasing international tension in a world which was dividing into hostile camps, the imperialist and the socialist. They received encouragement from the events in France where in 1947 the Communists were expelled from the Government. They were actively supported by U.S. imperialists, who believed Czechoslovakia to be the weakest member of the socialist camp from which it could be severed with a little assistance. They saw Czechoslovakia as a desirable anti-Communist base bordering on the Soviet Union. As a result, Czechoslovakia's reactionary parties began to attack the country's foreign policy and to agitate in favor of the Marshall Plan which would have tied Czechoslovakia to the other States dependent on the United States.

The Benes Plan

The following quotation from the "London Daily Express" in April 1948, explains what the plan was and the part played by President Eduard Benes:

"Filled with false hopes, Benes sent his political forces into the fight and abandoned them in the midst of their defeat. The President's plan was that twelve anti-Communist Ministers resign in protest against the leadership in state affairs by Communist Premier Gottwald. He believed that such a step would bring nearer an election crisis which would crush the Communists. He assured his Ministers that he would not accept their resignations and that the manoeuvre was absolutely safe.

"He told those who recommended a postponment 'No it must be done now'. But Premier Gottwald struck back instead of giving in. He demanded that the resignations be accepted, and when the President refused to do so, he aroused a torrent of anger throughout the whole nation. This made clear to Benes that he had made the worst calculation in his life.

"... In the following two days (after the resignation) the President twice accepted his Ministers and assured them secretly that with all the weight of his office he would continue to refuse to accept their resignations. He said that they could rely on his protection.

"But at the same time he failed to take any counter-measures against the Communist tornado which thundered throughout the whole capital. Finally Benes gave in. He sacrificed his Ministers." (retranslated from Czech).

WHY THE HURRY?

There were good reasons for the reactionaries to make their plans in haste. The most important provisions of the Kosice Programme had not yet been carried out, and the Communists were pressing for their fulfilment. These were primarily the land reform, health and old-age insurance. At the same time, the C.P. was urging the writing of a constitution embodying the revolutionary gains of the Czechoslovakian people, which would provide the legal basis for the further building of socialism in Czechoslovakia.

The reactionaries did everything that they could to hamper this program, but at the same time they realized that the obvious obstruction of these provisions of the Government Program, which had been agreed to by all parties, would weaken the position of the bourgeois parties in the parliamentary elections to be held in the spring of 1948, and that the Communists would undoubtedly win an absolute majority in the new parliament.

Under these conditions, the reactionaries were advised by their Western allies to decide the struggle before the elections, to isolate the Communists immediately and force them out of the Government.

Formally this plan looked quite reliable. It counted on winning the Social Democrats to the side of the bourgeois parties and, as a result, on the parliament's refusal of a vote of confidence in the Gottwald Government. Following the resignation of the Government, the President would once more entrust Gottwald, as chairman of the largest party, with the task of forming a new cabinet, but the anti-Communist bloc would prevent its establishment by demanding impossible conditions as its price of its participation in the Government. As it was clear that the Communists would not, on the other hand, permit any reactionary to become Premier, the solution was to be found in a so-called non-political government of civil servants to prepare for another election, this time under the control of the Western powers, in other words, a repetition of the move which in 1920 led to the establishment of Czechoslovakia as a capitalist state.

Such was the plan, and the signal for its carrying out was the resignation of the ministers representing the National Socialist Party, the People's Party (Catholic) and the Slovak Democratic Party, on February 20th, 1948. The pretext was the failure of Communist Minister of the

Interior Vaclav Nosek to carry out a Government decision, passed by a small majority in his absence, concerning the transfer of eight officers of the Security Police. The decision was unconstitutional, since the minister of the Interior alone had the right to decide, and the Minister was scheduled to speak of it at a Government meeting on the 20th, the day of the resignations.

BOOMERANG!

The Ministers who resigned had been assured, as has been explained, that their resignations would not be accepted and that the Communists would be forced to resign. However, another hitch developed in their plans. Because of the activity of the left wing of the Social Democratic Party, that party had repeatedly postponed decision on the plan, and when the other ministers resigned, the Social Democratic ministers remained at their posts. Thus twelve ministers resigned, and fourteen (the Communists, the Social Democrats and two independent minsiters) remained at their posts, and government could continue to function. The Communist Party therefore demanded that the resignations of the reactionary ministers be accepted and their places filled.

Proof of the tremendous popular support for this demand was the huge mass meeting in Old Town Square, in Prague on February 21st, the national congress of the chairmen of works councils in the Industrial Palace in Prague on February 22nd, the one hour strike on February 24th, (which some western correspondents tried to describe as a protest against the "Seizing of power by the Communists") and the final tremendous gathering on February 25th, where the acceptance by President Benes, of the resignation of the ministers, and his appointment of new ministers was announced.

This last-named meeting was described by British M.P. John Platts Mills in a radio broadcast from Prague as follows.

"I arrived here on Wednesday (Feb. 25th, Ed.) at the very height of the crisis, indeed at the moment of its solution, and in time to hear the announcement of the Prime Minister. This was done to a gathering of some 200,000 people or more in Wenceslas Square. I'd never seen such a gathering in my life. The most striking thing I saw was right at the end, when a group of women set on the police officers and kissed them. I see by the London papers this morning that the streets were packed with armed police. Well, they may have been, but if they were, the police (some 200,000 of them) had dressed themselves in workers clothes and seemed to have spent the morning in some factory. It is suggested that these people were forced to come in to the square as they did. I don't believe it. That crowd fully agreed with what was going on here. I can tell you, myself, of the enthusiasm shown by the people throughout as the names of the new Government were read out... I don't understand how this can be described as a violent seizure of power by the Communists. I read that Mr. Bevin, in the House today, calls it the taking over by dictatorship in common form.

"What really happened is that the right wing of every party in the Government, what I call the backward section has been ousted, and the progressive section of each party has come into power. The act of the

taking itself was cheered by millions, for in the official stoppage throughout all factories yesterday, there were mighty gatherings in every town and village . . . I have seen myself many incidents, going about today, that show that the very idea of a "terror" is completely beside the point. Any other country will be lucky where progressive policy can be introduced so smoothly.

". . . The result has been a consolidation of the power of the workers against the great business men. It ends finally the possibility of foreign intervention in Czechoslovakian affairs and it leaves the new Government determined to carry on and complete the existing program. In short, to do precisely what the ministers who have resigned were pledged to do but latterly have refused to do".

Some details about the congress of works councils mentioned above: The congress had been scheduled for that date sometime previously, and its main purpose was to discuss and approve further steps towards nationalisation, the first of which had been taken in Oct. 1945, when basic industry, mines, banks and insurance were nationalized. (Czech railways have always been state-owned). When during February it became evident that a government crisis was being plotted, the workers in individual plants instructed their delegates not to allow the reactionaries to carry out their machinations. At the congress itself a resolution calling, among other things, for further nationalisation and rejecting in advance any form of reactionary government was passed by 7,914 votes to 10 votes, with no abstentions.

U. S .ON THE SCENE:

On February 20th at 8:30 in the evening there arrived in Prague a special train with 42 U.S. army officers who allegedly had come to visit the historic monuments, However, a different purpose was released at a closed editors' conference of the newspaper Svobodne Slovo, organ of the National Socialist Party, where two prominent leaders of the party submitted the plan which they had received from the Party's General Secretary, Vladimir Krajina.

After outlining the plan described previously for excluding the Communists from the Government in, as Krajina put it, a "formally" democratic way, his message stated:

"The Communists are practically unable to defend themselves effectively against our plan. We shall deprive them of the helm smoothly and before they can take any action. Besides that, 40 U.S. divisions stand in Bavaria. Our Western allies have been informed of our action thoroughly. Zenkl (the then-chairman of the National Socialist Party and Vice Premier, Ed.) was not in France in vain. If the Communists try to defend themselves by force, we shall ask the Western allies for assistance. If they have come to Greece they will come here. Those 42 American officers, who arrived in Prague today, have not come to merely admire our historical monuments either. Already in tomorrows papers we must persuade the people our resignations spell offensive, a victorious offensive."

Arms were to be delivered to Czechoslovakia from abroad to support the reactionary putsch. When the first train-load arrived a few kilometres from the Czech border at noon on February 23rd, it was already clear

that the putsch would fail. Therefore this train, as well as others which followed, had to return. The wagons of these trains carried the inscription "transit" and were marked to indicate that they were through trains from France to Poland, The whole matter might have remained a secret were it not for the fact that a gang of train robbers such as were still operating in Western Germany in 1948, broke into one of the trains and found machine guns in one wagon, rifles in another, hand grenades and ammunition in another. Sometime later the gang were arrested and the whole thing came out in a court hearing. However, when the question arose of where the weapons had come from the public had to leave the court room.

It was quite clear that these weapons, together with the 40 U.S. divisions and the 42 officers were all part of the plan which provided for U.S. interference if the crisis were prolonged.

The Soviet Union undoubtedly also played a role in the February events. It was the role played by its international prestige, which undoubtedly made imperialist circles hesitate to act openly as they did in Greece, for instance. As things turned out differently in Czechoslovakia from what they expected, the Western Powers had to bury their plans and of course intended that they should remain a secret.

The fact that the putsch failed resulted in a regeneration of the National Front which returned to the original program of 1945. Those faithful to this program as, for example, the present Minister of Health, Plojhar, a Catholic Priest and Chairman of the People's Party, the present Minister of Communications Alois Neuman and Minister of the Building Industry Prof. Emanuel Slechta, both of the National (now Czechoslovak) Socialist Party, the late Minister of Transport Alois Peir, etc., took control during the February events of the parties dominated until then by reactionary politicians. Thus the National Front with all its original parties represented again in the new Government (and the Government (and the Government which followed) resumed the task of carrying out the original goals aimed at the building of a new society in Czechoslovakia.

GRACE, PEACE, AND REVOLUTION

It may be a truism but it is none the less true that whatever happens happens in relation to everything else that happens. Everything rubs against its neighbor. It throws out circles of influence that go out and out and never entirely get lost. The world is a world of infinite interaction. Each kiss or kick, each motion of the working hand, each thought or plan or gospel or philosophy, each act of exacerbation or of conciliation, each planting or harvesting, each smile or tear, each song or dream, has its place in the infinite sequence of action-reaction, stimulus-response, thesis-antithesis, give-take.

Grace is an ingredient of this interaction, the bearing point at the junction between action and reaction. In its absence the interaction is violent, awkward, and usually incomplete.

The essential work of grace is that it anticipates the reaction in the action, the antithesis in the thesis. Even as the thesis is put forward the

creative imagination of grace perceives its antithesis in the making and in grasping it imaginatively makes easier the dialectic movement. The same thing occurs when the new thesis or synthesis is born. In fact this synthesis is characteristically and uniquely the work of grace.

Why speak of the salvation of grace or of *saving* grace? Because at times of fundamental change or revolution grace saves the souls of men from breaking in two, it saves the continuity of history, it makes the future forgive the past and the past forgive the future, it saves nations from violence and war, it saves civilizations from catastrophe.

Rolling with the fall, anticipating the fall, it breaks the fall and saves broken bones. Action-reaction, give-take, is the law of life. It comes about willy nilly, but grace gives as it takes and takes as it gives, thus bending the straight line and rounding the corner. This is so true that it can become dangerously true. For instance, when the master-slave relationship was obliterated and caught up into a man-to-man relationship of comradeship by grace on both sides, grace on the part of the master and grace on the part of the slave, secretly they laughed the whole slave system out of countenance. This is why the early Christians didn't attack the legality of the slave system. Their fellowship (koinonia) simply by-passed the system without bothering to condemn it. If the fellowship could have spread fast enough Rome would have been compelled to invent new forms of economic life. But it didn't, and here is the danger: to substitute grace for justice, to pretend that the unjust system need not be changed; whereas the meaning of grace is that it should fill the law to overflowing, not hide it or destroy it. No false grace, such as the lie that sanctifies aggression and calls it defence of the free world can save us from its consequence. Love may seem a weakling and justice may seem to falter in God's world, but God is not mocked forever, and love with justice will sweep away falseness and cruelty and purify men's laws.

An act of grace can save our world from war today and from a terrible destruction, grace such as is evidenced in the call on the part of a group of notable Americans for a fundamental review of American foreign policy, grace such as is evidenced in the public repentance of a great power (USSR) for past iniquities and injustices, grace such as that shown constantly by Nehru of India in his task as mediator between socialist and capitalist power. An invincible will drives socialist power forward, integrated with the surge upward of all repressed peoples everywhere. The blind brute instinct of "what we have we hold" stands in the way. The brink of war "haves" will sacrifice humanity itself rather than give up. They move to a head-on collision.

The future *will* be born. And the past out of which the future issues *must be induced* to yield to the parturition. It is this inducement which is the work of grace.

A JOB FOR THE CHURCH

The call by certain Protestant church leaders to join Catholicism in its war to the death on Communism is virtually a call to stop arguing with Communism, to stop conversing with Communists, to put them outside

the pale of social recognition, to outlaw them, to put them in jail. It is a call to physical, not mental strife. Not only is it anti-liberal and anti-Christian, but it joins the great exponent of authoritarianism in its crusade against forces which (in its mind) very much include Protestantism itself. In its fight against materialism it betrays its own principles for material considerations.

A great task—vital for democracy—faces the true churches of today. It is to re-open the forum of social controversy.

The bolting and barring of the door of controversy has been symbolized by the legal and social outlawing of the Communist Party in fascistic defiance of the Constitution, but the disease of conformism has eaten into the heart of all growth or movement backwards towards feudalism.

The fact that Communism has been sorely infected with its own brand of conformism is no reason for democracy to cast aside the freedoms which are the core of its health. Quite the contrary. The very models of conformism are the Jesuits and yet we do not ask that Jesuits be put in jail. Nor should we. Let them speak. No doubt they have something to teach us. And let them be answered. The trouble is today that they speak but are not answered. To answer them would be controversial and that is the sin against the Holy Ghost of the airwaves and the newspapers. And the peripheral debates we are permitted to hear such as our Citizens' Forum programs, are miserable substitutes for the basic controversies that should be raging freely and deeply throughout our world.

Here is an aching void that could be filled by the church. To fill it there will be needed (1) a deep faith that there is a fundamental unity (not uniformity) in men of good will; (2) a large understanding of the circumstances that drive men into various convictions; (3) an invincible love out of which this faith and understanding grow.

To carry it out we must entertain champions of each point of view. There can be no contest without the opponent on the field. The contestants must abide by the rules of civilized debate. Interruptions, name-calling, and other devices of exacerbation on either side of any debate should rule a contestant off the panel immediately.

These discussions should be prolonged or continued in series until the subject has had a thorough airing. They must be in earnest. They must want to reach a conclusion.

To re-establish these controversies in a climate of grace and in a strong passion for the truth is a job for the church.

GOOD NEWS FROM RUSSIA

At the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party the President of the Soviet Union, Voroshilov, told the delegates that a new criminal code had been created and that the judiciary had been re-organized to guarantee *the rule of law.* Thus a fault has been recognized and at least an attempt is being made to rectify it.

The Party Secretary, Khrushchev, who in the ordinary course of events might have been expected to continue the dictatorship, has himself repudiated in the name of the Party the whole concept of one-man rule. So

far very good.

The Central Committee of the Party (133 members) proposes to raise the wages of unskilled workers and lower some of the high salaries, thus reversing an established trend which had been for a generation dividing the people into "socialist" classes. Without doubt this will be done.

Three factors, we believe, have opened the way for these liberalizing acts and others which must follow them:

(1) the new feeling of security in the world, the relief from foreign pressure due to the growth of friendly and the shrinking of hostile areas;

(2) the steadily rising standard of living;

(3) the cumulative effect of humanist education, the widespread reading of the world's classics. The democratic implications of such a broad popular culture were bound to make an ultimate breakthrough into governing circles, so that this is far from being a mere top-down reform. It has been yeasting in the people for a long time.

OIL AND ISRAEL

Recent shipments of war material from the US and Canada to the enemies of Israel, enemies who have sworn to destroy Israel, have thrown a lurid light on the oil diplomacy of Dulles and Eden, dramatizing the hypocrisy of their holier-than-thou attitude towards similar, but unconcealed, Russian and Czech shipments.

Egypt, Saudi-Arabia, Syria, Transjordan, Iraq have received over the past year heavy shipments of offensive weapons from UK and US. Against logic, common sense, honour and decency, a poison of propaganda is being disseminated from State Department and Foreign Office to present Israel as the bad boy of the Middle East. Through their influence the UN pampers Egypt and censures Israel. A climate of opinion is being formed in which Israel can be politely blackmailed into giving up a vital part of her territory to Egypt to save herself from a "second round" invasion.

The struggle for the oil of the Middle East is now three-cornered. The USSR has joined in. It is now a US-UK-USSR fight, and Israel is plunk in the middle. Israel herself may find oil in her Negev and it is part of the Negev that Eden wants to give Egypt. Israel is a democracy situated in the midst of autocracies and feudal chieftainships, smack on the cross-roads of the world, and on top of the jack-pot of this oil age. Recently wrenched from the grasp of UK it is a tragedy that she has committed herself to the US side in this conflict, because the US is busy arming and bribing the sheiks to move out of the UK orbit and into the US orbit. Since the UK is busy at the same game what we have is a competition on the part of the US and UK to please and to arm for the "second round" the sworn enemies of Israel.

Britain needs oil. The US needs oil. The USSR needs oil. Legally the oil belongs to the sheiks, but the legal structure of countries can change. If the spirit of 1917 or even of 1776 should sweep these lands, presto

changeo, the oil would belong to the people who would sell it in the open market and the US, UK and USSR would have to line up with the other customers and wait their turn to buy. A change from the present status would be more in the interests of the USSR than of UK and US who are now doing business with the present status, undercutting and undermining both one another and Israel.

The US and UK would like to fight this out in their own way. UK has a great force in Crete and warships in the Mediterranean, ready to take advantage of any disturbance in the Middle East. People have wondered why Britain holds on to Crete. It is their only chance to stay in the oil game, and Britain needs this oil more than the US does.

The USSR is THE TARGET of both US and UK and has been forced to sit there right alongside the oil and watch it being siphoned off. So it is drawn into the game. Where does Israel fit in all this?

If, as seems likely, the US keeps to its present policy of currying favor with the sheiks, who rob their own people and keep them in ignorance, who ride around in Cadillacs and buy slaves for their harems from Africa, then Israel, by committing herself to the US cause, commits herself to reaction in the Middle East and betrays and contradicts her mission there.

Would it not be the part of wisdom for Israel, having moved out of the political orbit of Britain, to move now out of the economic orbit of the US, to maintain the strictest neutrality in the East-West conflict, which is in truth an attack by the West on Russia, and to concentrate on her great mission as democratic tutor to the Middle East?

FATHER CLARY

A blackbird on its green cover, its title, "The Insurgent Spring," in the beautiful Latin script used by the Irish, this book is a welcome arrival, bringing memories of its author, the Rev. Clarence E. Duffy, with whom we were privileged to work during our last days in New York. This book, which can be described as an autobiographical sketch, touches on some points in our collaboration (pp. 170-185). To work with Father Clary was a rare pleasure. He is a distributing point of grace, courage, humour. To put it mildly, the higher clergy of his church have never been entirely at ease with him. Yet he never despaired. Nor has he ever lowered his social and spiritual standards for one moment during his long hard battle to have them validated in his church. Embarrassed, harassed, persecuted, he has remained faithful to the letter and spirit of his vows.

Duffy belongs to a long tradition, going back to Columbanus and forward to McGlynn and O'Flannagan. He will probably be remembered longest and most gratefully for his work o nthe land. He was an apostle of the soil. In the July-August, 1955, issue of *The Catholic Worker* an article by Hisaye Yamomoto describes Duffy's three years' work and its results at Peter Maurin Farm, one of the Catholic Worker rural communes. Here he took 23 acres of run-down soil and, by ditchnig, by building composts, by scientific organic farming, put it back well on the way to becoming a fine self-sustaining property supplying a community of from

20 to 25 people, plus the flock of summer visitors, with fresh fruits and vegetables.

In these days of crop surpluses, when large-scale farming and chemical milling are driving the family farmer out of business and filling the consumer with food that starves him, such an accomplishment is apt to go unnoticed. It may be remembered, however, when our wracked nerves and bursting mental hospitals remind us that we are children of this planet, that when we eat its wheat we press hungry lips against the mother's breast and must not be cheated of their sustenance. Here health becomes religion and religion becomes health, and bodily health is intimately related to mental (and spiritual) health. Was this not so in the mind and work of Jesus? And in the work of the Celtic monks? There are strands of this thinking in China and in India and in the Jewish sect of the Nazarenes. May they converge and be woven together into a bright and shining unity for our day!

THE GRACE OF DON WEST

The Southerner lasted long enough to prove that Don West, long known as a sensitive poet and a prophetic spirit, was also a very able and inspiring editor.

Panicked by the government-sponsored hysteria, uninstructed as to their rights and duties, the churches, over which C.T. Pratt presided and which controlled the destiny of the paper, forced West out. West showed remarkable grace when he left, not questioning Pratt's integrity. He said, "The Spirit of *The Southerner* is a thing that can't die. It will continue."

If Don West can think of the positive side of this story sure we should hold up his hand. There was a year in a little town in Georgia, a whole year, when God was honoured by His Church . . . it will happen again!

OUR GRATITUDE

We are deeply grateful to Arthur Stratton of Vancouver through whose good offices we are able to present the article on Czechoslovakia which we hope will clear up any lingering doubts as to the nature of the change-over in that very great little nation.

We are also very grateful to all those who have renewed their subscriptions and support. There are still some from whom we have not yet heard. Your letters of encouragement and criticism are vital to the progress of our work.

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